

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

AUGUST 1979 No 47 10p

THE CRITICS SAY:

Written by political buffoons
who delight in misinforming
the uninformed.

WE REPLY! p.8

WHISPER SCARE TO GRANT

The Department of the Environment threatened to cut a £6800 grant to the Hackney Cypriot Association after an anonymous "Red Scare" letter was sent to Partnership Minister Geoffrey Finsberg. This alleged that the Hackney Cypriot Association, the Hackney Asian Association and the Hackney Council for Racial Equality were all run by "communists and extremists" and urged the Minister to reallocate partnership money.

All the Council's recommendations for partnership funding were passed to the Department of the Environment (DoE) several months ago for final ratification by the Minister. When the Tories took over, a delay was announced, but final approval was still thought to be a formality.

Then on 16 July a Home Office official rang Hackney Council for Racial Equality (HCRE) officer Ian Haig and said that the DoE had received an anonymous letter, saying that all three organisations were controlled by extremists. The letter recommended that money destined for the Hackney Asian Association (HAA) should, instead, be split between the HAA and the Hackney Muslim Council and that money for the Hackney Cypriot Association (HCA) should be divided between "the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities".

UNREPRESENTATIVE COMPLAINT

This letter was followed by another, this time signed, from the Hackney Cyprus Turkish Association (HCTA) which complained that the HCA was unrepresentative of the Cypriot community in Hackney and said that it should receive partnership funding instead.

HCRE told the DoE and Home Office that they had judged the partnership applications on the work organisations did in the community. They regarded

individual political affiliations as a person's own affair.

Instead of throwing these letters in the bin DoE officials allowed them to be placed before the Minister with all the other papers.

What is most extraordinary is that the DoE appeared to consider that anonymous and malicious letters of this kind should be given the same weight as carefully considered applications submitted by the HCRE and ratified by the Council.

DIVISION

There has been a certain amount of division amongst ethnic minority groups since the partnership scheme was first announced. The Hackney Cyprus Turkish Association, which is the only minority group not affiliated to the HCRE, was one of the organisations that did not get part partnership money. It claims that the Hackney Cypriot Association does not represent the Turkish Cypriot population - which the HCA denies.

Now the Minister has decided to avoid a political row and accept the Council's recommendations, and so the HCA will receive its £6800 grant to pay for a full-time worker.

Andreas Michaelides of the HCA told HPP that the worker would co-ordinate the activities of the Association. These range from organising cultural events and classes to running football teams that have about 40 regular players.



A place of peace and tranquility, looking towards the River Lea from Walthamstow Marshes. Will the peace be shattered by the gravel works being considered by the GLC? See page 5.

Frank O'Neill was arrested by police at the De Beauvoir Festival for handing out leaflets urging people not to join the Army. Below he tells HPP what happened.

INSULTED BY ARMY

On 30 June, I and other members of East London United Troops Out Movement went to leaflet people passing the army display at the De Beauvoir Festival. We felt that we should counter some of the propaganda put out to kids about life in the army. The leaflets said that life in the army wasn't all playing with fancy guns, going to exotic foreign lands to have exercises in the sun.

We had been leafletting for about half an hour when a policeman suggested to one of us that we should move on as we weren't wanted. Quite soon, a sergeant arrived, and said that we could leaflet in twos on the pavement. I was quite surprised at all the fuss, as up to then I had nothing but support from people who had read the leaflet. However, I moved on to the pavement in front of the army display and continued to leaflet. There were a few cars parked half on the pavement and half on the road, and I was able to stand by them and not obstruct the pavement. At this stage, I was leafletting on my own.

After about 10 minutes, the policeman came up to me and asked if I was going to move on or not. I said the sergeant had said we could leaflet on the pavement. He repeated his question. I repeated my answer.

He then gave me 30 sec-

onds to move over to the other side of the road. I saw no further point in arguing with him. I agreed and asked him for his number as I wished to make a formal complaint. He said: "Okay, you're nicked" and quickly twisted my arm behind my back.

In the car on the way down to the station, he asked me why was I bringing politics into a community festival. I told him that the army were already there and I was only trying to balance out their propaganda. He said they were doing a good job in keeping the kids off the streets. I replied that perhaps they were, but they then put them on the streets of northern Ireland, exposing them to being shot. He appeared to be very irate at this stage and said that he had connections in Republican circles that there was nothing I could tell him about northern Ireland. He said he hoped my mother got bombed that night and that it would take more than little weeds like me to get them out of northern Ireland. At this stage, we mutually agreed that the conversation should be terminated.

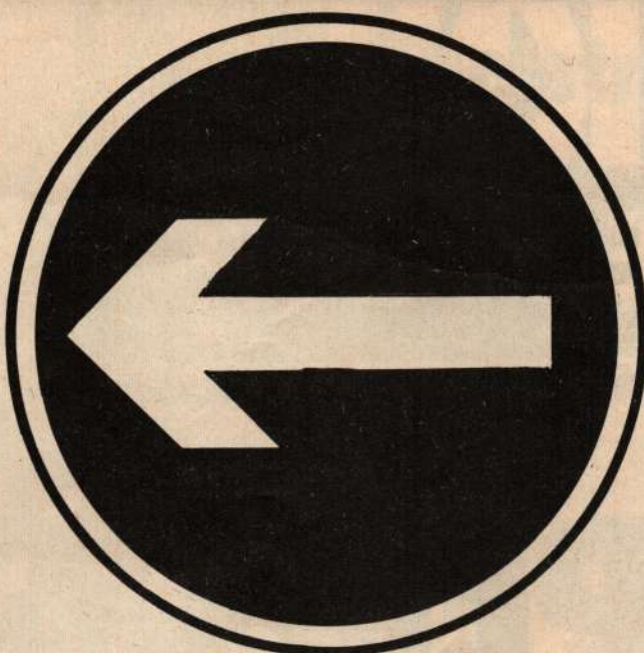
At City Road police station I was told I was going to be charged with obstruction. I was put in a cell and told this was normal for someone on an obstruction charge. After two hours, I was photographed, fingerprinted, charged with obstructing the

pavement and distributing insulting writing likely to cause a breach of the peace!

Meanwhile, back at the festival, an inspector had suggested that the other leafletters move on. He said they were insulting the army. When no one seemed intimidated by him, he asked one UTOM member who had an American accent if she was an illegal immigrant and where was her passport? He again suggested they move on as no one wanted them there. At this stage, a festival stallholder said he was glad to see them there. This seemed to throw the inspector totally and he retreated, still muttering that if they took his advice they would go away.

The British army is very worried by the amount of soldiers who have been to northern Ireland and have either deserted or bought themselves out. The authorities have always been very wary of people leafletting the army. The United Troops Out Movement see this arrest as a political arrest, especially in the light of the second charge. This is a rarely-used section of the 1936 Public Order Act. Its implications are far-reaching, for if the charge is proved, it means that calling for troops out of Ireland could become an offence. There will be a picket at Old Street Magistrates' Courts at 2 pm on 16 July.

Left turn to unite Hackney



The conference "What's Left For Hackney?", organised by Hackney People's Press on Sunday 22 July was thought to be a success by most of those who attended. At the end, there seemed to be a general feeling that it was time that socialists in Hackney got together and discussed common issues, and HPP was asked to convene an organising meeting for a future conference to be held later in the autumn. Provisionally, this organising meeting has been set for Monday 17 September at 7.30 pm in Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High St, E8. Please note this date now, although it will be confirmed in the September issue of HPP. This meeting will be open to anyone who is interested in discussing how best the left in Hackney can work together to form a socialist alternative. A report of the 1st conference will be presented and there will be a discussion of the shape and content of the autumn conference.

The All Nations Club was rather an extraordinary venue for the meeting. At 9 am on a Sunday it is also not the nicest place in the world. Darkly lit and not well ventilated, it seemed when people first arrived that the entire place was covered with a layer of beer cans, bottles, glasses and ashtrays. The vacuum cleaner didn't work properly, the owner couldn't be awakened so we couldn't open all the doors to let some air in, and how would we get it all clear before the hordes of people turned up at 10.30 to start registering? Of course, we needn't have worried too much, because at 11 am there was still only the handful of people who had been clearing up. The place was beginning to look reasonably tidy and we could begin.

At 11.15 people suddenly started arriving (for a conference that began at 11. Why does the left always arrive late for everything?) We started at about 11.45, with about 100 people present. Probably about 50 others were to turn up later on during the day.

The need to politicise

Helen Rosenthal, chairperson of the Hackney Communist Party, welcomed everyone, and warned bike riders that a few people had had their tyres let down or punctured (whether by kids or organised right-wingers we never found out).

She then introduced Arthur Latham and Martin Jacques who had been invited to start proceedings by discussing the left's situation after the Tory general election victory.

Arthur Latham, Chairperson of the London Labour Party, discussed the enormous influence of the "yellow pages", or popular press, in the run-up to the general election. The media had, he said, managed to shift concern away

from issues like the poverty gap and had acted as propagandists for the interests of the ruling class.

He attributed the Labour Party's loss of the election to the right-wing policies pursued by ex-Prime Minister Jim Callaghan and his allies and said that the battle was now on to break that stranglehold. Despite the fact that he, a left-winger, had narrowly missed getting re-elected in Paddington, he pointed out that many good left-wing Labour MPs had held on to their seats and a number of key right-wingers had lost theirs.

He spoke of the need to politicise people and the need for a programme of education in which key issues like public expenditure, the EEC, the question of taxation and so on were debated and the left alternative put forward. Real democracy was about people acting collectively, he said. He drew attention to some popular misconceptions about democracy where decisions taken by trade union committees, for example, were regarded as undemocratic. Decision-making by one man, however, (for instance, a newspaper editor) was the pinnacle of democracy.

He was followed by Martin Jacques, a member of the Communist Party Political Committee and editor of "Marxism Today". Very tired after a flight back from Japan (!), he still managed an analysis of the problems faced by the left following the ideological nature of the Thatcher election campaign and the consolidation of the Tory political base in the country.

He argued that the struggle between left and right was a battle for democracy. If the left was to become a popular voice, he said, it had to take up questions of state intervention, law and order, the welfare state and the like, and project alternative policies to those advocated by the right. The

left had to put forward positive and popular alternatives and not be seen as simply defensive. And the left was not just concerned with winning policies but with how these policies were applied and by whom. The question of how people saw the welfare state, for example, as theirs or someone else's, was important.

He welcomed the attention being given by both Labour and Communist Parties to the question of democracy within their own structures. "The autonomy of the Parliamentary Labour Party is probably the biggest single issue in relation to the Labour Party," he said.

"There is", he concluded "a wide-ranging attack on the Labour and democratic movements taking place which has already generated a response." The possible magnitude of that response had already been illustrated in the massive reaction to the Heath government's industrial relations legislation, he pointed out. But there were currently two important differences - the huge shift to the right and the changed economic situation. The left had to find new ways to combating this if it was to reverse its political decline. "We have to find ways of ensuring solidarity and unity between the various struggles in which we are engaged."

Seven workshops were held in the afternoon and these were reported on in a session chaired by Ernie Roberts.

Labour group

Catherine Hoey reported on how the Labour Council and the left workshop had discussed mainly how effective the Broad Left group of councillors had been in countering the entrenched position of the old guard. It was generally felt that it had had limited success and that what success it had achieved had often been reduced by the right later on. The Broad Left were in the process of reorganising themselves, however, and becoming open to any member of the Labour Party. They hoped that that might make them more democratically accountable and also give them more support inside the council for their actions.

Trade Unions

Dermot McNeill said that the Trade Unionism workshop had identified three main

problems in Hackney. These were the deindustrialisation of the borough, the lack of organisation of workers and how to inject socialist policies into the labour movement. Inevitably, the workshop had concentrated on the last of these and mainly on the linking of other struggles, notably the fight against racism. They had also discussed lack of democracy in the trade union movement and the importance of winning the wages argument, so that workers should not always be told that a demand for better wages was demanding the country. Genuine grouches such as bus delays was seen as another way in which prejudice was built up against the Labour movement.

Local Media

Paula Lanning reported that the Local Media discussion had centred round how appalling the Hackney Gazette was, with its dangerous stereotypes of the population of Hackney being composed of Arthur Mullards and its total lack of reportage of politics, local or otherwise. This was contrasted with general feeling that Hackney People's Press was important in Hackney, but obviously suffered from all the drawbacks of operating on a shoestring and being only a monthly publication. People were urged to support HPP however, by sending in information, attending meetings, helping with production and providing outlets for sale.

Health

The Health workshop had discussed the general situation in Hackney, said Diana Morley, which was very grave. There had only been one vote for the present round of cuts from an east London representative on the Area Health Authority, but they were outvoted by the representatives from the City and other bodies who control the health service in our borough. Now the Council had withdrawn its members from the Area Health Authority and was backing the Hackney Health Campaign, but we all knew that the DHSS would just carry out the cuts regardless.

Racialism

The Racialism workshop was reported on by Jill Sheppard. This had discussed the role of the trade union and labour movements in fighting racialism. In Hackney, the Trades Council was active,

but this was not generally well known. Many people felt that the whole question of immigration controls was a central issue. Also, black people were generally suspicious of anti-racist organisations, which they did not see as always acting for them.

Housing

Jon Taylor reported that the Housing workshop had centred on the attitude of the Council, which was regarded as paternalistic. All tenants felt that they should have more control over the running of their own estates. They acknowledged that there were often deep divisions between the tenants themselves. There was also discussion of the Council policy on rehabilitation and rent and rates, where it was felt that there should be public involvement before decisions are made.

Community Politics

The final workshop on the relation between socialist and community politics was the best attended, which indicated - to this writer at least - that the central theme of the conference was something that local socialists feel to be important. Elizabeth McGovern reported that there was a lack of development of community politics from a socialist point of view. This had been most apparent recently in the public workers' strike, where there was very little understanding of the issues behind the workers' action. Most people were only concerned because their dustbins were not being emptied.

In general, it was felt that there was a lot of scope for injecting more socialism into the local political scene. An organisation like Hackney People in Partnership, for instance, was important for bringing together the people active in the voluntary and community sector, to campaign for better allocation of resources. There was a need to make the public aware that senior council officials often made decisions without consulting elected members. There was a need for an alternative borough plan although there is no official borough plan anyway.

Finally, attempts had to be made to involve local people in many more decisions about their own lives. Neighbourhood councils, for instance, could be very successful if they were allowed to have some power. However, if they are set up by the Council under strict controls, then there is not much chance for them.

The conference ended with another general discussion, with many people tired after what seemed a long day. There were final summaries from Tony Milwood of Hackney North Labour Party and David Green from Hackney CP. HPP was asked to convene another conference in the autumn, and details of the organising meeting are given above.

LORRIES CAMPAIGN: FULL STEAM AHEAD



Ball's Pond Road group formed

At a recent meeting in Dalston Library on 9 July, there was standing room only. The meeting was for all people living on the rat run lorry route from Hackney Wick to Archway, and those present listened as Vicky Barades went through the activities of the Graham Road Against The Lorries Campaign.

Their successful activities include meetings with council officers, road use surveys, petitions, research and measuring noise levels. The meeting heard how noise levels measured in a front room in Graham Road were 70 decibels while the noise level measured at the kerbside was 90 decibels. This compares horrifically with the legal noise limit of 84-89 dbs.

Comments were also made on the amount of damage to roads and property caused by the juggernauts. The GLC's Road

Research Unit has said that one big lorry causes the same amount of damage as 115,000 cars. This means that the rat run streets suffer from an equivalent of several million cars an hour.

To counter the juggernaut menace, the Graham Road group has proposed that there should be united action with other groups (see other story), a night-time ban on lorries and opposition to all road improvements along the route.

In the second part of the meeting, councillors John Kotz, Bob Masters and Richard Gee answered questions. One of the first questions was about the junction of Graham Road and Mare Street, and it was said that the GLC have been considering again the possibility of knocking down the Wimpy Bar on the corner which would only have the effect of making it easier for juggernauts to turn left there.

Many of the lorries using the rat run are overloaded, as it is well known among drivers that this route doesn't go close to any weighbridges, and therefore it was suggested by another member of the Graham Road group that if the Council were to buy a portable weighbridge, this would discourage a lot of the juggernauts from using it, and Cllr Gee said that this possibility was being followed up.

This encouraged one person present to say that he had seen an official letter about the problems of crossing Graham Road at the Mare Street end. Part of the letter reads as follows: "...we regret that as these lights are computer-linked, there is no time for people to cross Graham Road".

In other words, pedestrians' lives are at risk because of the need to keep the juggernauts hurtling as fast as possible through Hackney.

Another rumour which was brought up was whether the GLC have any plans for knocking down the south side of Graham Road to build a four-lane highway. The Councillors were asked to refute this possibility, and they said that they were not able to deny that this might be part of the GLC's plans. However, there was the reassurance given once and later repeated by Councillor Kotz that "We will resist any road improvements until we have a night-time ban on lorries".

In concluding the meeting, the chairperson of the Graham Road group, Andrew Haig, thanked the councillors for their backing and warned that "In 10 years' time, when oil is getting prohibitively expensive, the planners will have egg on their faces, and unless we stop them now, miles and miles of empty motorway."

There were about 10 residents of Ball's Pond Road at the meeting described above, and afterwards they decided to form their own group to fight the juggernaut menace. The campaign is going to be called: "The Right To Sleep And Breathe: No Juggernauts On Ball's Pond Road".

Since then, two planning meetings have been held, posters have been distributed and displayed and support received not just from local residents but from local shops, offices and two local schools. We are planning to write to Horace Cutler to invite him to spend a night sleeping in one of the houses.

A mass meeting is planned for Thursday 2 August as we go to press.

For more information, phone Chris or Martin on 254 1306.

Arthur MacCaig's documentary account of the "troubles" in Northern Ireland challenges the established British media's coverage of the situation over the past 10 years, which has continually churned out a detached and divisive view of sectarian conflict as the root of the problem. Instead, he presents a much-needed (for the British public) political analysis of Ulster as a colonial province subjected to the social and economic exploitation of the British government. By filming events from within the communities rather than outside, as most current affairs coverage tends to do, McCaig has presented a highly credible account of the development of this exploitation, from the days of the absentee landlords to the present time.

Although MacCaig approached the situation with a degree of independence - he is an American of Irish descent - he chose not to adopt a "balanced" account (which would have clouded the political issues), but concentrated on the Provisional movement as a nationalist struggle against British repression, both from the government and its loyalist supporters.

Comparison was drawn in the film to Britain's imperialist tactics in Aden. Indeed, Northern Ireland is a typical example of colonialist exploitation - high unemployment means cheap labour and a good source of foreign investment - and the inevitable military repression which takes place when the people try to alleviate their conditions. Until recently, the British government paid full compensation to those companies that had suffered damage as a result of the troubles - which proves that the government was only concerned with protecting its

business interests and not the lives of the people of the Province.

IRELAND and the media

A review of the film

"The Patriot Game".

It is no coincidence that unemployment and poor social conditions run highest in the Catholic areas, but sectarian conflict is as much a result of British exploitation as the economic conditions which exist in the Province: "In most of the nationalist districts unemployment was anything from 23-30 per cent and this over two or three generations. Well, after fifty years of that people finally began to seize control of their lives." (Time Out, 22 June 1979.)

This colonialist exploitation needs the compliance of a sympathetically right-wing press, to cloud the issues and prevent the domestic public from assessing the true situation. Although the film did not deal with the established media's role in effectively allowing the "troubles" to continue, its use of documentary footage from foreign television

stations and its skilful interplay of British TV news interviews with politicians like William Whitelaw and Brian Faulkner with events as the film recorded them, brought out how much media distortion and censorship goes on.

Bernadette Devlin was made infamous in the British press for her lack of respect for Parliamentary decorum, but the same press failed to present her arguments (and the reasons for her outbursts) that for every worker in Belfast who complains of appallingly low pay, there are 5,000 waiting to take that job. The media also present the IRA as a small bunch of fanatics whose sole aim is to kill "decent law-abiding citizens", but fail to point out that, according to the film, the IRA's bombing

campaign was aimed solely at those buildings which were symbols of British imperial-

ist repression in Northern Ireland, and not at ordinary citizens; the film also claims that the first casualties of an IRA bomb died because the police failed to pass on a warning, and that the incident was seized on by the army to begin reprisals against the nationalists.

The film made the point that the Peace People, organised and sponsored by a right-wing journalist as a pro-loyalist PR stunt, had a wide degree of publicity in the press, while groups such as the Relatives Action Committee (organised by relatives of internees) and other women's groups protesting about the British army's violation of people's homes and communities were ignored.

The positive aspect of the film lay in its tracing the development of people's consciousness as to their economic situation, and their attempts to oppose that situation by organising and controlling their own communities. When the transport authorities refused to restart the bus service to the nationalist areas, 350 second-hand taxis were bought from London and a self-help transport service was set up, using previously unemployed people. The taxi service also provided a vital communication link to the people of Free Derry, as it became known; the drivers could counter intimidating actions by the army by forming a road block on the main road and effectively close off the city.

The film also showed how the people of Free Derry recognised that the solution to their problems lay not in becoming a part of the Irish Republic, which was just another capitalist country prepared to exploit them in the same way, but in forming a revolutionary state.

There were some important points which the film did not touch on - for example, it did not deal with "H-Block" and the political campaign surrounding the issue of political status for nationalist prisoners - but that fault cannot be ascribed so much to the film, as to the financial problems directors have in making independent films on Northern Ireland. The film did, however, show how far the British government was prepared to exercise both military and social control in the Province in order to subsidise its capitalist economy.

In the same way, the Tory government is pursuing restrictive social and economic policies in areas of high unemployment and poor social conditions on the mainland (Merseyside, the North East) in order that the prosperous financial centres in the South can prosper even more. The "problem" of Northern Ireland is a symptom of the same exploitation which people suffer from in this country; its solution lies equally in the hands of the people on the mainland, by recognising their common struggle with the people of Ulster and not being forced into believing it is a separate issue. As was aptly put at the end of the film, "If you are not yet part of the solution, then you are part of the problem".

"The Patriot Game" is being shown at 3p.m. at the Dalston Rio on Sunday 5th of August.

There will be a demonstration starting at 2p.m. from Hyde Park on Sunday 12th August to commemorate the tenth anniversary of British Army intervention in Northern Ireland and to demand the immediate withdrawal of troops from the province.

PEOPLE TO PAY FOR COUNCIL'S BLUNDERS

Last summer the tenants of Smalley Estate began to take the tentative steps towards taking court action against Hackney Council for the excessive damp and condensation problems in their brand new houses. They probably didn't expect to become the focus of media attention. Now it seems that one can hardly walk across the estate without tripping over a reporter or television cable.

It wasn't until April this year that the Council sat up and noticed that something very serious was wrong with Smalley. This was just before they were taken to court for the second time by the Hackney Citizens' Rights Group, under Section 99 of the Public Health Act. Some careful PR work by HCRG who obtained the opinion of an independent expert, Dave Smith, that the architects should have known that the estate would have problems from damp if they had read a 10p leaflet on condensation, led Chief Housing Officer Tony Shoults to announce that he had commissioned an exhaustive survey from a leading firm of consultants, Building Systems Developments Ltd, to discover exactly what was wrong with the estate. This was announced at an angry meeting with tenants held in the Family Centre in April. And, under pressure, Charles Cable, chairperson of the Council Housing Management Committee, agreed that he would publish in full the report from the experts.

CONCLUSIONS

Time passed. The report was supposed to be ready in May, and it wasn't. It was then supposed to be ready in June, and it still wasn't. HPP published some preliminary findings in its June issue, conclusions which have been largely borne out in the final report. The report finally reached Tony Shoults on 14 July (although it is dated 6 July) and a special meeting of both the Housing Management and the Housing Development Committees was called for 24 July.

Before the committee meeting, Shoults announced that the report was going to be treated as confidential, and that he could not publish it after all, for legal reasons. This, we must assume, means that there is the possibility of the Council suing a sub-contractor (or, perhaps, take some action against an individual or department named in the report).

However, articles appeared in both the Guardian and the Architects Journal. These summarised some of the conclusions of the report and revealed that it was a very serious situation. "Asking the hypothetical question if Smalley Road was built to comply perfectly with the specification and drawings would there have been condensation, water penetration and movement of the structure, we would have to reply 'yes' on the basis of the evidence, was the damaging conclusion quoted by both papers.

The tenants were still to be denied the complete picture, it seemed, and they came to the joint Committee meeting, having been presented

with a four-page summary which was itself fairly damaging. They presented a deputation to the committees, which contained a list of 10 demands to the Council, including full publication of the report, compensation and a reduction of rent. Not surprisingly, this all met with very short shrift from Charles Cable, who would have been only too happy to hear the deputation out and then invite them to leave so that they could then discuss what to do in secret session.

NO ANSWER

However, there were a large number of tenants present to hear the deputation, and so the committees took the unusual step of suspending standing orders to allow tenants the chance of addressing the members and council officers. This many of them took the opportunity to do. One of them said: "We came here expecting to be told what would be done about the estate. How many more times are we going to be told that we have to come back again?" There was of course no answer.

The tenants were told that the remedial work necessary would be done. "How much it costs is not the question," Cable said. "It's got to be done, and it will be done." Then they were told that they all would receive a letter telling them of the latest situation, and that a panel would be set up, with councillors, council officers and tenants' representatives - one of the demands that the delegation had asked for. They were also waffled at about the standard of refuse collection, and senior officers promised that they would look into why the refuse was not collected from all the flats.

SECRET SESSION

The central question of the report was left in the air. The tenants were told that they would only be able to see the four-page summary. Indeed, they were actually quizzed as to whether they had a copy themselves. "No," they said.

So the tenants left, unhappy with the outcome, but pleased at least to have made some impression on the members and officers. The committee went on meeting in secret session, and did not take a vote on whether they would publish the report or not. The Borough Solicitor warned the members that he would want it put on record that if they did publish then it was against his advice. So, no vote and no report.

The following day, 25 July, there was a full Council meeting. This time the hapless Mick Andrews, chairperson of



Smalley Road estate: report reveals that it is a "catalogue of mistakes". Photo: Jane Heywood.

the Housing Development Committee was answering questions. Not nearly such a confident performer as Cable, he told "Tory Joe" Lobenstein, who is as pleased as Punch to have another weapon to attack Council housing with, that it was "inappropriate at this time to make the report generally available". Remedial work would be done as far as possible before the winter, he added, and the

be done before then is the extension of heating throughout the houses.

What is even more serious is that Tony Shoults has asked Building Systems Development to look at other estates where tenants have reported similar problems. The report indicates that faults might well be found on estates built after Smalley, in the Coordinated Housing

WHAT THE REPORT SAYS

On reading the report, a first reaction must be that it is nothing but an unmitigated catalogue of disaster. The most serious criticisms are of the design. At the time Smalley was on the drawing board there "was an awareness of an emerging problem (of condensation) that has in more recent years reached epidemic proportions" says the section entitled "The Mechanism of Failure". The evidence is that "ventilation was not designed at all." The report finds it "alarming" that proper design of the heating system, insulation and ventilation did not take place. Nor is the quality of the building spared. The damp courses in the parapets were not properly constructed. In fact, when one was removed by the investigators water ran out from underneath it. Asphalting of access decks and patios was not properly carried out. There are inadequate "falls" from the half-landings so standing water penetrates through to the floor beneath. There is extensive mortar fallen through into the wall cavities. All in all, there are a large number of faults, which lead to 18 separate recommendations for remedial work. The report ends with a section devoted to a visit to a new Council development at Ferncliffe Road, where the investigators found that there were a number of disturbing points. These included the fact that the estate is being built with no provision for ventilation beyond the statutory minimum. A minimum obviously inadequate on Smalley!

report would be given to the tenants when it is legally advisable.

As we go to press, the tenants have announced that they now have a copy of the report, and they will decide at a tenants' association meeting whether to distribute it. HPP has also got a copy and a summary appears on the box in this page.

What will happen now? Whatever Mick Andrews says, it would seem that the tenants are going to have to wait another winter before the extensive remedial work is done. The only possible work that could

Scheme. If that is so, then that could have a serious effect on Hackney's housing for years to come.

The most worrying aspect of all this is that Hackney's tenants - and to a certain extent the ratepayers also - are going to have to pay for the repairs to Smalley. Repairs of this type are charged to the Housing Revenue Account - into which rents are paid. If other estates do have similar problems, then the people who are suffering will end up paying for the Council's blunders.

Fighting for St Leonards

On July 12th there was a huge funeral procession as 400 hospital workers and other concerned people followed a coffin from St Leonards Hospital in a long march around Hoxton, ending up at Addison House, the headquarters of the Area Health Authority. "The coffin at the front of this procession could be yours" was the slogan being chanted by the demonstrators.

Halfway along the route the march was met by a large group from St Matthews Hospital. At the rally held afterwards Grace Fowler, their Shop Steward, said "I don't give a damn who I upset, the old people matter". We were told once before that we'd have to shut. That was three years ago, and after a three day strike we won."

After leaving the coffin at the door of Addison House for the Area Health Authority to see the demonstration dispersed with everyone vowing to keep up the fight until St Leonards Casualty and St Matthews are to be kept open.

On the morning of July 26th Dr Gerard Vaughan, a junior Minister from the Department of Health, visited St Leonards and was greeted by a picket of 150 doctors, nurses, other hospital staff and concerned local people.

HPP talked to a patient who had had to go into St Leonards 14 times in the last twelve months. Mrs Coussens has had two heart attacks in the last year, and said "I could be dead by the time I got to Barts".

Despite the good turnout for the fight to keep St Leonards open, when the minister arrived he swept into the hospital with very little attempt made to at least involve him in a discussion. But it was good to see that his official car was plastered with "Save St Leonards" stickers, although the action needs to be stronger than this if our "Save St Leonards" campaign is to be successful.

THE BATTLE FOR THE LEA

Threat to place of peace

Walthamstow Marshes are a place of perfect peace and tranquillity just 10 minutes down the hill from Upper Clapton Road. You can reach them by crossing the bridge near Latham's timber yard, coming down Spring Hill and crossing by the Marina, or crossing the bridge at the bottom of Springfield Park. You will find wild flowers, and beds of reeds eight feet high, and see all kinds of unusual birds.

The Marshes are a wild place with a charm of their own, a place nobody looks after yet many care for, a place where children can play with no one telling them to mind the flower beds.

Destruction

Yet the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, who unfortunately own this piece of land that used to belong to Walthamstow Council, are hell bent on destroying it permanently. They have applied to the GLC for planning permission to dig up 80 acres of the Marshes to extract gravel. The Authority does not believe in public consultation, for when Hackney Planning Department asked them if they would put a public notice in the Gazette, they refused, as the official boundary is the river and therefore the land lies just within Walthamstow.

The Authority does not care how many Hackney people use and love the Marshes as they are, in spite of the £50,000 a year they get from the Hackney ratepayers.

If these plans go ahead, they will take up to five years to complete, and will mean one 20-ton lorry every five minutes trundling up Lea Bridge Road and through Hackney streets laden with gravel. An accident at Kenninghall roundabout would be quite horrific.

The extraction is planned to start at the north end of the Marsh by the Marina, and work towards the railway in phases and then start again from the south and work back towards the railway. The plant site will be by the railway bridge, nearly opposite Ferry House and the Anchor and Hope pub. Digging will be to a depth of 30 feet, and 210,000 cubic yards will be brought out a year. At current prices of £5-£7 per cubic metre, someone stands to make a great deal of money from this.

Yet the benefit to the people who live in the area will be virtually nil, and some Hackney residents will suffer unbearable noise and dirt. Even if work is restricted to the hours of 9-5, this is not going to be much use to mothers with children who will have to put up with it all day long, every day for five years.

It is true that in about 10 years time those of us who have sailing boats will be able to have nice days out on the lake, and people with plenty of money will be able to get rid of it in a day at the grandiose entertainments complex planned near the riding stables...if it ever gets built, that is.

There cannot be many people living in Hackney and Walthamstow who seriously believe that these proposals would be a good thing for the area. We need more open space as it is, not less.

People describe the Marshes as Hackney's "countryside". They are a miraculously preserved semi-wetland habitat, used by naturalists, artists, walkers, schools doing nature study and anyone wanting peace and quiet. If the gravel extraction goes ahead, the loss to this area will be considerable, and of course this unique piece of land can never be replaced.

That is why we need to make a massive public protest now. When the machinery moves in, it will be too late. It is likely that the GLC will decide the fate of our marshes in the autumn, and only a really vociferous body of objections will make them turn down the application.

Tell 'em

Write to Hackney councillors Ken Livingstone, Ellis Hillman and Margaret Morgan, telling them what you think, and to Waltham Forest GLC councillor Robin Young.

Write also to the GLC Planning Department as soon as possible. The address is:

Mr D G Jackson, Controller of Planning and Transportation, County Hall, SE1.

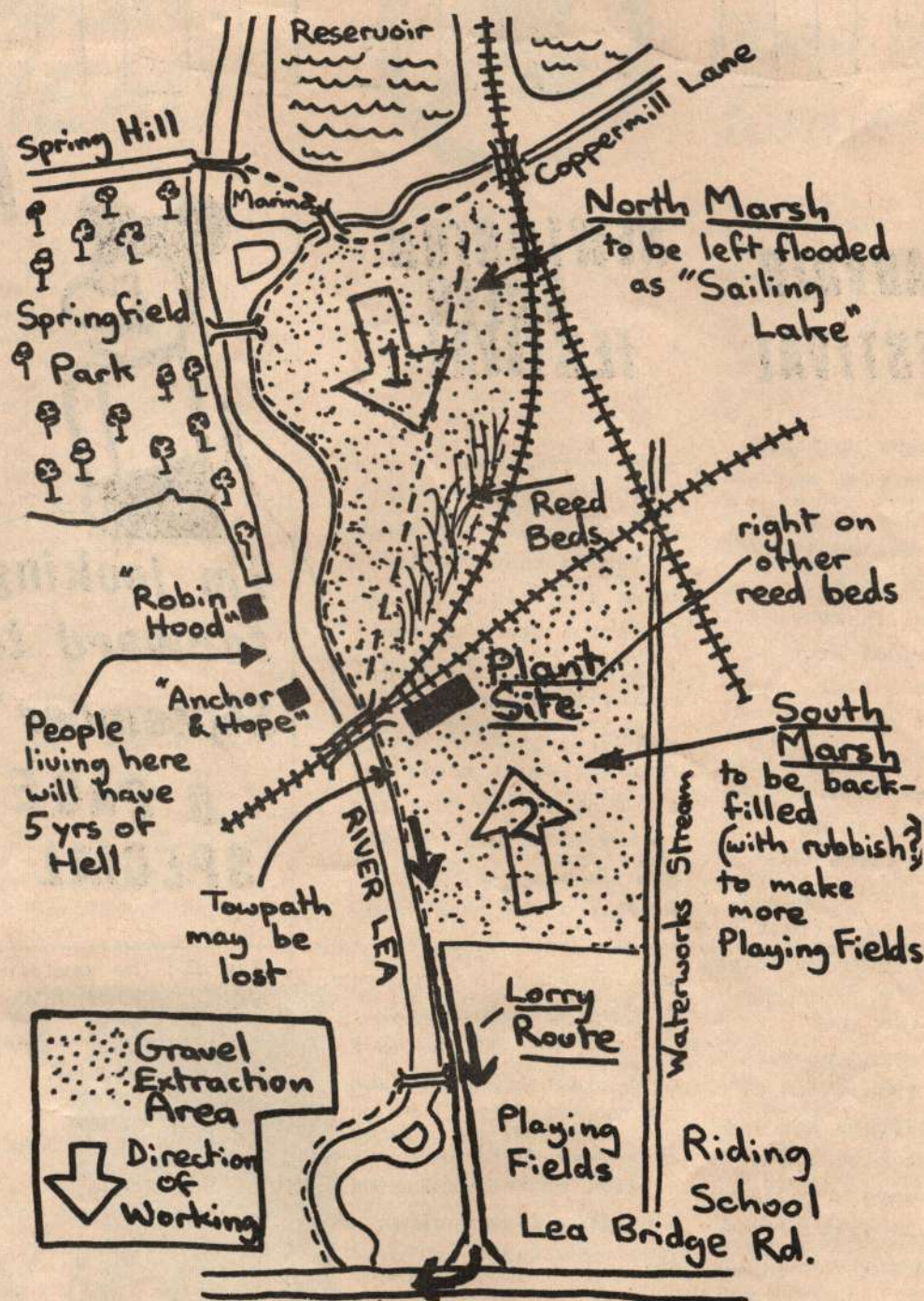
However, the real enemy is the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority. They are simply not interested in the needs of local people, and will probably dismiss us as a mere irritation. They are a secretive, undemocratic body. See if you can worm any information out of them. Write to:

Mr L G Johnes, Myddelton House, Bulls Cross, Enfield, Middx.

Please help us in our campaign. We need people to write to the press, locally and nationally and to be involved as much as possible.

Come to our mass picnic, a protest to show how much value the Marshes have. We are meeting at the Anchor and Hope pub, High Hill Ferry, E5 at 2.30 pm on Sunday 5 August. Other events which have been arranged include a fund-raising concert at the Trades Hall, Dalston Lane, E8 on Saturday 15 September at 7.45 pm when John Nash will be giving a guitar recital.

If you want to know more about our campaign, or want to help in any way, phone John or Jane Nash, 986 1765 or write to 93 Mayola Road, E5.



"Regional park" idea still a dream

While the Save The Marshes Group gears itself up for a sharp campaign to save the Walthamstow Marshes from destruction, a new group is being launched with the aim of saving the whole concept of the Lee Valley Park and restoring the vision that originally launched it.

The Lee Valley Association came into being at an open meeting at Tottenham in July to campaign for the better development of the Lee Valley Park throughout its length - from Stratford to Ware.

The Lee Valley Regional Park has been in existence since 1967 and is run by the Park Authority which has a wide range of statutory powers. Most importantly, it can raise revenue by levying up to an old penny rate throughout Greater London, Essex and Herts which if the Authority took it up in full would be worth over £9 million a year.

The Park Authority's duty is to develop the valley as a "regional park" for recreation and amenity - to realise the dream of the 1944 plan to turn it into a "great recreational and open air lung into the crowded East End."

Anyone travelling along the river by bicycle or on foot can see that that vision has soured and that the Authority's promise in 1969

to complete the Regional Park by the early 1980s has become a joke. For the most part, the Valley today is virtually as derelict as it has ever been. It is not that the Park Authority has done nothing: there are large leisure centres at Picketts Lock and Broxbourne and another is planned in due course for Lea Bridge which will include a central piazza with stalls and shops, a swimming pool, an ice rink (with spectator seating for 1,000), an entertainments unit, a children's fun area, riverside gardens and car parking. Other developments in or near Hackney include the marina at Springfield, horse riding and pitch and putt at Lea Bridge, cycle racing and a squash complex at Hackney Wick. And of course, the Park Authority plans to add a sailing lake opposite Springfield Park when the gravel diggers have finished.

What the Authority has failed to do is to improve the amenity of the Valley as a whole: to plant trees by the river, to blend its amenities into the landscape, to follow up early plans for greater access to Walthamstow reservoirs, to consider how to take best advantage of the maturing natural beauty of Walthamstow Marshes to open up and improve the stinking back river tow paths below Hackney Wick.

In theory, the Park Authority should be subject to popular control through the councillors from the adjacent boroughs who are the members and theoretically the controlling power in the Authority. Hackney has one member and the GLC has six, including Hackney's Ellis Hillman. In practice, the members appear to have generally rubber-stamped the recommendations put up to them by the Park Authority's permanent officers and they have submitted to a system of decision-making in closed session where red-hot secrets like the future of Walthamstow Marshes are treated as confidential items. Previous outside pressure groups have been repulsed by the Park Authority on the grounds that they are parochial and do not adequately represent the regional basis of the Park Authority. The Lee Valley Association (we hope) will be a Valley-long organisation which will defeat that accusation. Quite possibly, we will be accused of being an opportunist coalition of parish pump groups - we shall see!

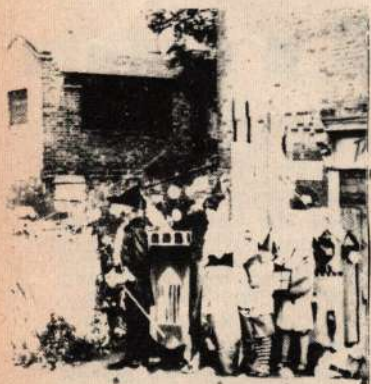
If you are interested, please come to our meeting at Chats Palace on Wednesday 29 August. If you can't, write for details or membership (which costs £1) to 3 Bushberry Road, E9. We hope to see you.

HACKNEY KIDS PAGE

DE BEAUVOIR FESTIVAL

We also went to the De Beauvoir Festival at Rose Lipman library. Hackney Peoples Press had a stall right at the back by the canal. There were pony rides, army cadets with a rifle range kebab stall, cakes and Hackney Anti Nuclear group. There was a carnival with among others Snow White and the seven dwarfs on a float, a Freeform float and the Royal Greenjackets band.

Because the Army was there, eight people came with Troops out of Ireland leaflets, and one of them got nicked, but we didn't have any film left to take pictures of them, because I'd used it all up.



White and the Seven Dwarfs

NEWINGTON GREEN FESTIVAL

I was going to go to Newington Green Festival with Chris to make badges on the Hackney Peoples Press stall. I was up at Newington Green at ten o'clock, but Chris didn't come till one o'clock.

About half past one we started to get going cos a lot of people came and wanted their own badges made. Then a girl came over and asked how much were the badges. I said 20p and she said, "I'm working on the other badge stall, and they're only 15p, so I told her to 'Dig Up', and she went away.

From two until four o'clock we didn't stop making badges, and after four o'clock people just came and went for the badges.

Then I took a break and walked round and there was a kid's castle inflatable, and for half an hour there was a display of Kung Fu. There were four "Sounds" there, two jazz groups, and there were other side shows like tombolas, chucking darts into cards to win a goldfish, stall to help the handicapped and a Centerprise bookstall next to ours.



And me and Chris took some pictures. Then after the fire cooled down, we went back to Centerprise.



I'm looking forward to September's 8 PAGE SPECIAL

Why did the skeleton run up the tree?
Because the dog was after his bones.

Why does lightning shock people?
It doesn't know how to conduct itself.

What's Dracula's favourite song?
Fangs for the memory.

Why did the baker stop making doughnuts?
Because he got tired of the hole business.

How do you make a sausage roll?
PUSH IT.

What letter is a vegetable?
A P.

What's green and holds up stage coaches?
Dick Gherkin.

What were Tarzan's last words?
"Who greased the vine?"

Who invented gunpowder?
A woman who wanted guns to look pretty.

This edition of the Hackney Kids' Page was produced by Margaret Woods, Lee James, Paul Bellini, Janet Smith, Delroy Smith, Chis Bryant, Karl Mbeki and others.

AUGUST ISSUE BUNKING OFF SCHOOL

I'm supposed to go to Danefer School, but I ain't been for about four months.

Sometimes I go to the library and read books. Kate Greenaway library is a good one as they let you do loads of things drawing, playing chess, and in the summer they have discos.

Other times I work down a pub run by a friend of mine. I play pool a lot and get some free drinks for going down to the cellar, putting disinfectant down, and hosing it all down, stocking up the shelves, collecting the glasses and washing up.

tell on us.

I only go to school on Wednesdays cos we got games until dinner time then I go home.

Once the educational welfare officer came round and says "What is your son doing off school" and my dad said "I kept him off school on holiday. She said What about the three weeks just after Christmas, and he said How do you expect me to remember all that. Then she went out.

On Monday I went to school just to get my mark, and then I came out with my brother and two of his mates and we



*I'll get those boys tomorrow in school!
Smoking!
Huh!*

When there's a dart's match I make 3 loaves of sandwiches. Sometimes I do babysitting instead of going to school. Sometimes when we bunk off, we used to get a red bus rover so we could go up West End and all round there, but one day we were on a bus and our teacher was on the bus behind us, and my mate had a cigarette in his mouth, and the teacher threatened us, so we gave him all our cigarettes and he didn't

smashed some windows in a house, and a bloke started chasing us. He caught one of us, and phoned the cops who came up to the school. The cops started "What are you doing off school" and the boy he was asking started to cry, and we got a letter saying that we had to pay 25p each for the window, and had to write an apology note.

FIRE !!

On 13 July I heard a boy shout: "Fire, fire". So me and my friend Chris ran downstairs and we asked him where it was and he said Sandringham Road.

So we ran across and when we got there, there was a lot of people standing around. By then, the fire brigade was there trying to put the fire out. Then two more fire engines came. By then, the fire was really big, and the people would not move.

So the fireman said to the kids who were around: "Get out of the fucking way." So I went round to the other part of the factory, and I saw a fireman trying to kick down a door. At last it opened,

information

All listings on this page are inserted absolutely FREE. The information for this issue has been revised and updated, but we would still welcome any further alterations or additions. For the September issue please contact HPP, c/o 136 Kingsland High Street, E8 by Friday 17 August.

Community, Tenants and Pensioners Groups

HACKNEY PENSIONERS ASSOCIATION
34 Dalston Lane, E8
Advice service on Tuesday and Thursdays from 10.30 to 4pm. Tea Bar Monday to Friday 10.30 to 4pm.

TASK FORCE
34 Dalston Lane, E8. Tel. 254 1620
Free advice for pensioners in Hackney. Odd jobs and visits in N16 and N4 only. Pensioners' activities and neighbourhood care in N5.

HACKNEY ASSOCIATION FOR WELFARE OF OLD PEOPLE
22 Dalston Lane, E8. Tel. 254 0715

HARAMBEE 2 PROJECT
74 Downham Road N1.
Social and advice centre, aimed particularly at black people.
Tuesday 10am-10pm
Thursday 10am-4.30pm
Friday 10am-10pm

OFF CENTRE
25 Hackney Grove, E8. Tel. 985 8566
Advice for young people between 13 and 25 with any problems.
Monday-Friday 10am-6pm (open until 8.30pm on Thursdays).

FRIENDS ANONYMOUS SERVICE
Friendship House, 27 Hackney Grove, E8.
24 hour telephone service with people always willing to listen and act.
986 2233 (24 hours)
985 0973 (office hours)
986 9146 (office hours)

FEDERATION OF HACKNEY TENANTS ASSOCIATIONS
Represents borough, GLC and private tenants throughout Hackney. Contact joint secretaries for details: Bob Darke, 154 Trelawney Estate Paragon Road, E9 and Steve Jacobs, c/o ALHE, 17 Victoria Park Square, E2 981 1221.

HACKNEY HOUSING ACTION GROUP
Concerned about the plight of homes left empty for long periods in Hackney and working to get them used. Contact Jon Webber, Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

HACKNEY GINGERBREAD
Group for one parent families. Meets every Monday at the Family Centre, Rectory Road, N16. Creche available. Contact Teresa Blackhall, 729 1647 for details.

HOMERTON GINGERBREAD
Group for one parent families. Meets every other Friday at the Wally Foster Centre. Contact 985 3972 for details.

HACKNEY UNITED TENANTS ASSOCIATION
c/o 35 Finmere House, Woodberry Down, N4.

Women

WOMEN'S CENTRE
1, Cazenove Road, N. 16.
Activities include: Mon. 2.00 Relaxation classes for older women. Mon. 7.00 Sewing class. Tues. 7.30 Meditation class (for men and women). Thurs. 7.30 Relaxation class. Fri. 7.00 - 9.00 Vegetarian meal at very reasonable price. Sat. 12.00 - 2.00 vegetarian meal. Playgroup each morning. Further info: 806 6664. All women welcome.

HACKNEY SOCIALIST FEMINIST GROUP
Meet alternate Mondays at the Factory, Matthias Road, N 16, at 7.30pm. Contact Pat 254 5821 or Harriet 254 6208.

HACKNEY TRADES COUNCIL WOMEN'S SUB COMMITTEE
Re-formed recently. Meets once a month. Contact Judy Newcombe, 254 0685 for details. All women and men welcome.

RAPE CRISIS CENTRE
Tel. 340 6145. 24 hour information and advice.

HACKNEY ABORTION CAMPAIGN
Meetings fortnightly at 20 Parkholme Road, E8. Contact 249 3768 for details.

Ecology

HACKNEY FRIENDS OF THE EARTH
Active group, campaigning on safe energy, bikes, wildlife, recycling etc. Contact Jim Read, 67 Fairholt Road, N16. 802 0122.

HACKNEY ANTI-NUCLEAR GROUP
Open to all those wishing to combat nuclear power. Meets every other Thursday in Centerprise. Contact 226 1799
SUN POWER ECOLOGY CENTRE
83, Blackstock Road, N.4.
Bookshop specialises in the environment, cooking, health, education, childrens' books; also crafts and some wholefoods. 01 226 1799

Advice

Free legal advice on housing, landlord and tenant, employment, social security, welfare, matrimonial, immigration and discrimination problems can be obtained from the following centres:

CENTERPRISE
136 Kingsland High Street, E8. Tel. 254 9632.
THURSDAYS 6.30-7.30pm.

HOXTON HALL
128a Hoxton Street, N1. Tel. 739 5431.
WEDNESDAYS 7-8pm.

KINGSMEAD
Wally Foster Centre, Homerton High Street, E9. Tel. 985 3804.
TUESDAYS 7-8pm.
STOKE NEWINGTON ADVICE GROUP SERVICE.
102 Manor Road, N16. Tel. 800 3770.
MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS 7-8pm.

ALLEN ROAD
12 Allen Road, N16.
THURSDAYS 7-8pm.

Advice can also be obtained from:

HACKNEY ADVICE BUREAU & LAW CENTRE
236-8 Mare Street, E8. Tel. 986 8446.
Open Monday-Friday 10am-5pm (7.30 on Thursdays).
Legal aid and advice on housing, rents, repairs and employment problems.

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX
1-11 Hoxton Street, N1. Tel. 739 4654.
106 Old Street, EC1. Tel. 253 2155.

HACKNEY COUNCIL FOR RACIAL EQUALITY. 245 Mare St, E8.
TUESDAYS 7-8.30pm.
Immigration, discrimination, housing law and other problems. 986 4121.

THE FAMILY CENTRE
50 Rectory Road, N16. Tel. 249 8334.
Information and help in all community problems. Cooking, washing, creche facilities. Open all day.

HOUSING ADVICE CENTRE
302-4 Mare Street, E8. Tel. 986 8123.
Helps with all housing problems. Repairs, rebates, landlord/tenant, council/tenant.

HACKNEY CENTRAL INFORMATION BUREAU
Town Hall, Mare Street, E8. Tel. 986 3123.

HACKNEY NORTH LABOUR PARTY ADVICE CENTRE
5 Stamford Hill, N16.
Advice and information on legal, financial, welfare, housing, social security and personal problems.
FRIDAYS 7-8pm.

RECTORY HOUSING AND WELFARE ADVICE CENTRE
Family Centre, 50 Rectory Road, N16.
Help with housing, employment, health and social security and community and race relations problems.
SUNDAYS 10.30am-12.00 noon.

Advice can also be obtained from **HARAMBEE 2 PROJECT, OFF CENTRE and FRIENDS ANONYMOUS.** See Community Groups listing on this page.

For MPs and councillors Advice surgeries see **LABOUR PARTY under POLITICAL GROUPS** listing on this page.

Arrested? Helping enquiries? Evicted?
EMERGENCY LEGAL SERVICE
Ring 986 9891. 24 hour free legal service from 6pm Friday over whole weekend.

Education

ENGLISH FOR SPANISH SPEAKERS
Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6.30pm at Latin America Centre, 17 Hoxton Square, N1.

ADULT LITERACY SCHEMES
For details of adult literacy courses in your area contact:

Carol Morris, BETHNAL GREEN AEI, 229 Bethnal Green Road, E2. 739 7790.
Donald Kenrick, CLAPTON AEI, Brooke House, Kenninghall Road, E5. 985 9646.
Graham Morris, HACKNEY COLLEGE, 249 7221.
June Hewes, HACKNEY LIBRARIES, Shoreditch Library, Pittfield Street, N1. 739 5153.
Sue Shrapnel, HACKNEY READING CENTRE, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8. 254 9635.
Cal Weatherald, HIGHBURY MANOR AEI, Jack Ashley School, Blackstock Road, N4 226 9190.
John Rake, HOXTON HALL, 128a Hoxton Street, N1. 739 5431.

HACKNEY LANGUAGE SCHEME
Teach the kind of English needed in day-to-day life. Classes operate throughout Hackney. For further information contact Annette Giles, 249 1496, or call at the Family Centre, Rectory Road, N16 on Thursday mornings.

Workshops

THE WORKSHOP
81 Lenthall Road, E8. Tel. 254 3082.
Print your own posters and T-shirts. Cost of materials only. Open by arrangement.

COMET WORKSHOP
Halcomb Street, N1. Tel. 729 0936.
Learn sewing, macrame, toymaking, woodwork. Creche available, toy library. Tea and coffee. Open every weekday.

Political Groups

HACKNEY LABOUR PARTY
HACKNEY NORTH AND STOKE NEWINGTON
Constituents advice service at 7pm every Friday at 5 Stamford Hill, N16 when local councillors are present.

Ken Livingstone, GLC councillor, has advice service generally on 4th Thursday of each month.

Details from 5 Stamford Hill, N16. Tel. 800 7430.
HACKNEY NORTH LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS: for details contact secretary, Mumtaz Khan, c/o 5 Stamford Hill, N16.

HACKNEY SOUTH & SHOREDITCH
Constituents advice service at 7.30pm. every Friday at 96 Dalston Lane, E8. Ron Brown, MP, available 2nd and 4th Friday of each month. Margaret Morgan, GLC Councillor, available 1st Friday of each month. Local councillors every Friday. Advice service also operates at Holy Trinity Church Hall, Blechley Street, N1, at 7pm. on 1st and 3rd Fridays. Ron Brown is present on 1st and 3rd Fridays. Margaret Morgan on 3rd Fridays, and local councillors on 1st and 3rd Fridays.
HACKNEY SOUTH LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS: for details contact secretary c/o 96 Dalston Lane, E8.

HACKNEY CENTRAL
Constituents advice service at 7.30pm. every Friday at 96 Dalston Lane, E8. Stanley Clinton Davis, MP, available every Friday. Ellis Hillman, GLC Councillor, available every other Friday. Local councillors every Friday.
HACKNEY CENTRAL LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS: for details contact Mrs A Smith, 294 Navarino Mansions, E8.

HACKNEY YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE
Meets weekly. All young people welcome.

HACKNEY COMMUNIST PARTY
Twelve branches hold meetings regularly throughout the borough. All welcome.
HACKNEY MORNING STAR GROUP
Meets weekly. Organises political, social and fund-raising events in support of Britain's socialist daily paper, the Morning Star. All Morning Star readers/supporters welcome.

For further information and a copy of the monthly newsletter detailing the meetings, campaigning actions etc. organised by the Hackney Morning Star group, Young Communist League and Communist Party contact David Green, 126 Amhurst Road, E8. Tel. 249 6374.

HACKNEY SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY
Meets regularly in the borough. Contact Liz 739 9772 for details.

LONDON WORKERS GROUP
For independent militants, working anarchists and all those who wish to organise for direct workers control. Meets fortnightly. Contact Box W, Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, N1, or ring Dave, 249 7042.

ANARCHY COLLECTIVE
Produces ANARCHY, a seasonal magazine on sale in Centerprise and Rising Free, 20p. Also involved in general anarchist activity. Ring 359 4794 before 8pm.

LIBERTARIAN COMMUNIST GROUP
c/o 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

ANARCHIST COMMUNIST ASSOCIATION
Box 11, Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, N1.

SOCIETY FOR ANGLICAN-CHINESE UNDERSTANDING
Hackney/Islington Branch. Contact Maureen Taylor or Mon Lawlor (263 4359 during daytime). SACU is open to anyone who favours friendship and understanding between Britain and socialist China.

HACKNEY COMMITTEE AGAINST RACIALISM
All-party anti-racist campaign. Meets first Wednesday of each month at the Family Centre, Rectory Road, N16.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN HACKNEY GROUP
Meets second Thursday of every month at 8pm at Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street E8.

HACKNEY AND ISLINGTON WORLD DEVELOPMENT MOVEMENT
Campaigns on third world issues, especially against the Arms Trade to these countries.

NEW COMMUNIST PARTY
Hackney Branch meets on a Tuesday night at Centerprise, 8pm. Information from NCP, 395 Walworth Road, SE17 2AV.

HACKNEY SOCIALIST CHALLENGE SUPPORTERS GROUP
fortnightly on Thursdays at 7.30pm in the Britannia, Mare St.
Further details from Hackney SC, c/o PO Box 50, London N.1. or from Martin, 359 8180 (day).

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
Hackney Group.
Meets 2nd Tuesday of each month, 8.00 at: Friendship House, 27, Hackney Grove, (off Reading Lane) E.8.

NORTH HACKNEY ANTI NAZI LEAGUE
Meets fortnightly. Contact Box 9, c/o 136, Kingsland High Street, E.8.

WORKSHOP
77a, Lauriston Road, E.9.
01 986 9585 Open 10.00 - 6.00 Mon. - Sat.
Pottery workshop and shop selling ceramics and pottery handmade in the workshop. Also Macrame plant hangers, jewellery, cards and other crafts.



Children

HACKNEY UNDER FIVES
136 Kingsland High Street, E8. Tel. 254 9145.
Information and support for parents with children below school age. Contact Madge Harte. Stores are available every Saturday from 10am-12.30pm. Open monthly meetings first Tuesday of every month at 8pm. in Centerprise.

HACKNEY PLAY ASSOCIATION
136 Kingsland High Street, E8. Tel. 254 9145.
Information, advice and help to people organising play facilities for children. Contact Lilian McPettridge or Mo Ross.

CHILD-CARE BULLETIN COLLECTIVE
112b Forest Road E8.
Publishes bulletins and pamphlets about child care and related topics. Collective is open to anyone interested. Contact 226 0817 or 254 2227 for details of next meeting—with creche.

TOY LIBRARY
Family Centre, 50 Rectory Road, N.16. A new toy library for all children under 5. Play facilities tea. Every Tuesday 2-3.30pm. Contact Sue Corlett 806 1968.

Transport

HACKNEY PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACTION COMMITTEE
Meets regularly to discuss how to improve public transport in Hackney. Contact Tony Jacobs, 3 Hackney House, Morning Lane, E9. Tel. 986 2303.

HACKNEY CYCLISTS ACTION GROUP
Contact Tessa Bain, 10 Kynaston Road, N.16. 254 4559

Gays

EAST LONDON FAGGOTS
Collective of gay socialists living and working in East London. Contact 19 Redmans Road, E1. Tel. 790 2454.

GAY SWITCHBOARD
Tel. 837 7324. 24 hour information and advice.

EAST LONDON CHE (Campaign for Homosexual Equality)
East London CHE welcomes gay women and men. For details phone John, 504 1110 or Kate, 539 2331.

GEMMA
Gemma Group for Disabled Lesbians, including older women. Contact BM Box 5700, London WC1V 6XX.

Food

TOWARDS JUPITER
191 Mare Street E8. 985 5394
Wholefood shop also selling books and crafts.

FOOD FOR ALL
3 Cazenove Road, N16. Tel. 806 4138.
Wholefood shop, also selling books and crafts. Run by Ananda Marga, a socio-spiritual organisation (see Meditation).

OFF CENTRE
Drop-in centre for Young Unemployed.

Free snacks, use of telephones and newspapers. A meeting place for the young unemployed.

Off Centre Basement.
25 Hackney Grove, E8.
986 4016.

HACKNEY SOCIETY

An amenity group, affiliated to the Civic Trust, concerned with Hackney's environment and architecture. Meets on the third Monday of each month. Details from Chairman, David Batchelor, Tel. 985 7937 or Secretary, Robert Hill, 75 Glyn Road E5 Tel. 986 8761.

Music and Broadcasts

ISLINGTON & HACKNEY MUSIC WORKSHOP
Sing-song third Thursday every month, 8pm. Free. Ring Dave 249 0025.

HACKNEY HOSPITAL RADIO
Hackney Radio Roadshow disco unit. Contact Bob Kingsley 539 6235 or Hackney Hospital Radio, 985 5555 ext 115.

POETRY AND MUSIC CLUB
The Chatterbox, 1a, Chatterton Rd, (off Blackstock Rd.) Finsbury Park, N.4. Weds. 8.00 - 11.00 p.m. All welcome. 20p admission. Performers free.

HACKNEY CHESS CLUB
Weds. 7.30pm - 10.30pm
Fri. 7.30pm - 10.00pm
Centerprise Daily
Tues. - Sat.
For any information contact T. Wilson, 135, Manor Road, N.16 5PB.

Men

DALSTON MEN'S GROUP
Contact Pete, 39 Parkhome Road, E8. Tel. 249 3072.

EAST LONDON/BRIXTON MEN'S GROUP
Contact Paul, 12 Montague Road, E8. Tel. 254 9497.

EAST LONDON MEN'S CENTRE
19 Redmans Road, E1. Tel. 790 2454.



LATIN-AMERICA CENTRE 'cerrado'

The Latin America Centre, which has been operating since October 1977 from a disused part of St Monica's School in Hoxton Square was forced to close its doors on Saturday 28 July.

After having been able to occupy the premises rent-free for nearly two years, the Augustinian Order of the Catholic Church which owns the premises believes that it is on the verge of finding a purchaser for the building and wants the Latin America Centre to leave.

The aim of the Centre is to provide a place where people from different Latin American countries and British people can come together for mutual support, exchange of ideas and relaxation.

In the 18 months since

its opening, the Centre has run many educational classes in Latin American studies, English language classes, Spanish and Portuguese classes and held workshops in mime, music and drama. There is a thriving film club, and weekly socials on Friday and Saturday nights.

A craft and bookshop, Armadillo crafts, which is aimed at promoting a wider understanding of Latin American culture, and at supporting craft co-ops in Latin America also operates from the Centre.

The Centre has also provided a focus for some community initiatives in the area, with children's parties, jumble sales, the only musical float in the Shoreditch festival, a

fiesta to mark the Hackney Festival, events for children during the school holidays, and a base for some of the work of the Bethnal Green Adult Educational Institute. Hoxton is an area which has needed this kind of community initiative for years.

The Centre urgently need a new base, and to continue its good work with the local community that base should be in South Hackney. It is scandalous that less than 100 years away from their present site there is an empty building, just been redecorated. It is assigned to "community use" and empty, and no one knows what to do with it. This is Shoreditch Town Hall. Now, why can't the Latin America Centre move in there?

The strange case of Pamela Lonsdale

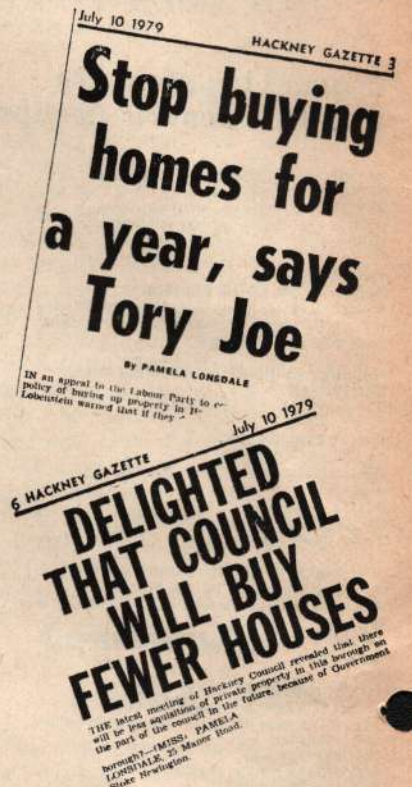
One of the curiosities during the two-month long journalists' strike last winter when the editor of the Hackney Gazette produced the paper all on his own were the reports that were boldly signed by "Pamela Lonsdale". Since that time, Ms Lonsdale has continued to submit the occasional specimen of her journalistic endeavours to the Gazette.

What is more curious is that she also writes letters to the Gazette, expressing her views on the local political scene, which she is, of course, perfectly at liberty to do.

However, on 10 July, she achieved a remarkable double. On page 3 of the Hackney Gazette, there was a report of the Council's finance committee meeting, extravagantly headed: "Stop buying homes for a year, says Tory Joe". Then on page 6, there was a letter from her about the same subject, headed:

"Delighted that Council will buy fewer houses". You might guess from the headlines that Ms Lonsdale is a friend - or even a fan - of "Tory Joe" Lobenstein. Well, of course she is. She even stood as a Conservative candidate in Eastdown ward in the 1978 elections.

Ms Lonsdale also has another qualification which one would think would make her an excellent journalist. At council and committee meetings, she never makes a single note. She usually sits in the seats reserved for special guests and friends of councillors, huddled closely to her chinless friend, fellow Tory candidate



Christopher Sills, while the hacks on the press bench scribble copiously through-out.

So what is the Gazette doing, printing eulogies to "Tory Joe", written by a member of the Conservative Party, which pass as objective reporting? You may well ask, which is what we said to a journalist at the Gazette. The journalists' union "chapel" are going to discuss it, we were told. So now you know.

WHO IS MISINFORMING WHO?

What you are reading is written by "political buffoons who delight in misinforming the uninformed". Who said that? John Tyndall? Miles Leggett? Joe Lobenstein? The editor of the Hackney Gazette? No, wrong each time. It was none other than the acting leader of the Council, John Kotz.

Flattered as we are to be discussed by him in a Council meeting, we wish that he would get his facts right.

We reported in our June issue that last year the Labour group had voted that they should not accept the Queen's kind offer of tea and buns at a Royal Garden

Party. This year they did. (The fact that last year's mayor, Sam Cohen, went with this year's, Betty Bloomfield, is not really relevant.) When we went to press the actual members who were to attend had not been decided. So our story was substantially correct.

We also resent being

called political buffoons. There is no other serious reporting of local politics in the borough, an omission we do our best to rectify. So we say - in the time-honoured phraseology of the Daily Mirror - "Come off it, Johnny Kotz. Who do you think you are kidding?"

Correction

Last month's HPP carried a report on the Clissold Ward by-election which had a couple of factual mistakes.

The Communist Party candidate, Les Skeates, was not sacked but was given notice. Due to support from his union, this was withdrawn. Secondly, he doesn't work at Arcola Street DHSS but at Sylvester Road. Sorry!

MORE MONEY FOR HPP

On Saturday 21 July, HPP held a jumble sale at the Family Centre in Rectory Road and raised £70. Many thanks to all those who donated, helped or bought.

IT'S A(NOTHER) GIRL

Another reader for HPP! Well done, Jill and Jeremy.

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS is an alternative non-profit making monthly newspaper produced by an open group of people who live or work in Hackney. We publish this paper because we believe that Hackney needs an alternative to the commercial press to serve the real interests of its people. We have no editor, no shareholders, no commercial advertising and no party political backing.

HPP is your newspaper: anyone who lives or works in Hackney is welcome to come and help us. No one is paid by the paper and all decisions are made collectively.

We normally hold meetings every Monday, in Centerprise. During August these will be suspended, however, so if you would like to get in touch with us, please write to us c/o 136 Kingsland High Street, London E8, or ring 249 0311 any evening or weekend. We are always looking for people who are willing to help us write, produce or sell the paper, so please contact us!

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